

## Message

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**From:** Hassell, Emily [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=24C1350E0DF84A3CA1F5852C0FEB971B-HASSELL, EM]  
**Sent:** 5/11/2018 8:08:04 PM  
**To:** AO OPA OMR CLIPS [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=427e98d7c5d74c5fb1d469a061371223-AO OPA OMR]  
**Subject:** News Clips - 11 May 2018

*(Full stories, highlights, and details are listed further down in the email, and can be jumped to by clicking on any of the links below.)*

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### **Daily Caller**

<http://dailycaller.com/2018/05/10/trump-transition-team-potus-fuel-efficiency-ruling/>

#### **Trump Transition Team Urges POTUS To Hold Line On Fuel Efficiency Ruling**

By Chris White, 5/10/18, 6:55 PM

Three members of President Donald Trump's transition team urged the White House Thursday to stay the course on a ruling rolling back fuel efficiency standards crafted during Obama's administration.

Analysts Shirley Ybarra, Myron Ebell, and Thomas Pyle are encouraging Trump to stay the course on reforms to the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE). Activists and the auto industry have criticized Trump for his move to ding former President Barack Obama's efficiency standards.

"The CAFE mandate is a vestige of a bygone era of perceived scarcity," Ebell, who represented Trump's EPA transition team, said in a press statement. Modern energy production has rendered moot any need to dramatically ratchet up the industry's fuel mileage requirements, he noted.

"My fellow signatories and I thank the president for taking on the mandate and encourage him to face down California's Democratic political machine," Ebell explained. "As we have said before, decisions about what kinds of cars people drive should be made [by] consumers, not by bureaucrats making backroom deals."

Ybarra and Pyle headed the president's Department of Transportation and Energy Department teams, respectively. All three analysts wrote a letter asking Trump to not waver on his initial decision.

The plan would also target California's ability to set its own vehicle efficiency standards. California's high standards have forced automakers to build more fuel-efficient vehicles, which ultimately effects national efficiency standards.

Obama aimed to raise the average fuel economy of automobiles to more than 50 miles per gallon within 10 years. California got permissions from the Obama administration to issue its own, higher emissions standards.

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### **Washington Examiner**

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/energy/trumps-transition-chiefs-urge-him-to-stay-the-course-on-auto-rollback>

#### **Trump's transition chiefs urge him to stay the course on auto rollback**

By John Siciliano, 5/10/18, 4:54 PM

President Trump's former transition team leaders urged him on Thursday to stay the course on reforming auto emissions rules in meetings with automaker CEOs on Friday.

The transition chiefs don't want Trump to be swayed from moving ahead with a plan at the Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Transportation to weaken fuel efficiency rules for cars.

"We understand that some in the automaker community have expressed concerns about your current plans to reform the program," the transition heads said in a letter to the president.

They point out that it's "worth noting that early in your presidency, these same automakers urged your administration to 'reconsider imposing such a far-reaching mandate on an entire industry' and were greatly concerned that the existing mandate, which you are attempting to reform, 'could cause up to 1.1 million Americans to lose jobs due to lost vehicle sales.'"

They argue that Trump's proposed plan to reform the Obama-era auto rules would better accommodate consumer choice, rather than proceed under a mandate to make cars that people do not want.

The letter was signed by both Tom Pyle and Myron Ebell, the two leaders of Trump's transition team for the Energy Department and the Environmental Protection Agency, respectively, and Shirley Ybarra for the Transportation Department.

The conservative transition leaders also don't want Trump to back down in facing California in a court battle over fuel economy rules that they say has the auto-industry concerned.

"Their main concern is the expected legal battle with California," the letter continued. "Led by [California] Governor Jerry Brown and Attorney General Xavier Becerra, the state intends to sue your administration over the necessary changes to the existing mandate – a mandate they not only support, but also seek to extend even further through 2030."

They warned that what "many liberal California politicians really want to do is ban gasoline-powered cars altogether," which they noted is evidenced by a bill now before the California legislature to ban all models of gasoline and diesel cars by 2040.

Pyle, Ebell, and Ybarra want Trump to be unencumbered by these concerns and move forward with his administration's proposed reform of the rules.

"We agree that in an ideal world, California would negotiate with you in good faith, but we all know that is not a reality in this current political climate," they wrote.

"Your efforts to reform this mandate are about cost, consumer choice, and whether or not your administration or the State of California gets to set a national policy," the letter added.

Under the Obama administration, California's climate and vehicle policies were given tremendous weight in designing the next round of vehicle rules, the chiefs explained.

"Under the Obama Administration, California was given the ability to set the mandate for the entire nation," the letter explained. "The automakers agreed to this because they wanted to avoid having to potentially comply with two different mandates and because they had just been given a hefty bailout by the Obama Administration."

EPA granted California a waiver under the previous administration allowing it to move forward with its stricter vehicle standards and still meet the EPA requirements. States have a choice to either abide by the less-strict federal EPA-Transportation Department rules, or abide by the California standards.

"If there is to be one national standard, it makes more sense for that standard to be set by the federal government and not by one state government," the letter said. "But that is what is likely to happen if you change direction now."

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#### **CBS News**

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-hosts-roundtable-with-auto-ceos-live-updates/>

**Trump says he has confidence in Pruitt, in roundtable with auto CEOs**

President Trump hosted a roundtable with auto CEOs at the White House Friday, as the administration looks to roll back environmental regulations for automobiles. During the meeting, with embattled Environmental Protection Agency head Scott Pruitt in the room, a reporter asked if Mr. Trump still has confidence in him.

"Yes, I do, thank you," Trump responded.

Mr. Trump's administration — and Pruitt specifically — has been looking to ease environmental-related regulations on businesses. The deputy White House press secretary said Mr. Trump "will hear from the automaker CEOs about the impact of the rule-making on the auto industry and their efforts to negotiate a "national program" with the state of California."

The White House has made it clear the administration is, despite Pruitt's seeming missteps, quite happy with the EPA head's progress on the president's agenda. White House legislative affairs director Marc Short sat down with CBS News' chief White House correspondent Major Garrett recently, and expressed how Pruitt "has delivered" on the administration's agenda.

"I think that the reality is that there's an ongoing IG investigation at the EPA, but if you look at the way that the director - the administrator, I should say -- has delivered on our agenda and the promises we made, he continues to do it day in and day out," Short said. "So I think that Scott is -- because of the agenda on the environmental front there's plenty -- it's always going to be a controversial issue. And I think he's always going to be a target no matter what."

Attendees included the CEOs of the big three U.S. automakers, including GM's Mary Barra, James Hackett of Ford, Sergio Marchionne of Fiat Chrysler, as well as top executives from global automakers BMW, Mercedes Benz, Toyota, Honda and others.

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## **Politico**

<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/energy/whiteboard/2018/05/chao-pruitt-lighthizer-join-trump-in-automakers-meeting-1202001>

### **Chao, Pruitt, Lighthizer join Trump in automakers meeting**

By Eric Wolff, 5/11/18, 9:27 AM

The White House released a list of the attendees for this morning's meeting between President Donald Trump and automakers.

The meeting represents a last ditch chance for automakers to persuade Trump to seek a deal with California on a deal to ease fuel economy requirements.

"President Trump looks forward to a productive meeting today with major automakers to discuss the Administration's forthcoming rulemaking on Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emission standards for automobiles," White House Spokeswoman Lindsay Walters said in a statement. "The President will hear from the automaker CEOs about the impact of the rulemaking on the auto industry and their efforts to negotiate a 'National Program' with the state of California."

Attendees include Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, and Larry Kudlow, director of National Economic Council.

The following executives from automobile manufacturers and trade associations are expected to attend:

- Mitch Bainwol, CEO of Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers
  - Mary Barra, Chairman and CEO of General Motors Company
  - Scott Becker, Senior Vice President, Nissan North America
  - John Bozzella, President and CEO of Global Automakers
  - Bob Carter, Executive Vice President Toyota Motor North America
  - Dietmar Exler, President and CEO of Mercedes-Benz USA
  - James Hackett, President and CEO, Ford
  - Bernhard Kuhnt, CEO of BMW North America
  - Sergio Marchionne, Chairman & CEO, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles
  - Rick Schostek, Executive Vice President of Honda North America
  - Brian Smith, Chief Operating Officer, Hyundai Motor America
  - Hinrich Woebcken, CEO of North America, Volkswagen
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## **Bloomberg**

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-05-11/automakers-seek-to-use-trump-summit-to-avert-war-with-california>

### **Automakers Seek to Use Trump Summit to Avert War With California**

By Ryan Beene and John Lippert, 5/11/18, 4:00 AM

American automakers may be on a mission impossible when they visit the White House on Friday.

They want to persuade President Donald Trump to cooperate with Jerry Brown, the Democratic governor of California, who invoked biblical references when calling the Trump administration's proposal to roll back auto efficiency regulations "profoundly dangerous."

Top executives of General Motors Co., Honda Motor Co., Toyota Motor Corp., Ford Motor Co. and other companies are scheduled to meet Trump to discuss trade and environmental standards enacted by the Obama administration.

The executives plan to emphasize their support for easing the Obama-era standards, but not so much that it triggers a conflict with California and results in a split market of environmental regulations set by Washington and Sacramento.

"We are not asking the administration for a rollback," Ford Chairman Bill Ford said Thursday during the automaker's annual meeting. "We want California at the table and we want one national standard."

Top executives including GM's CEO Mary Barra, Ford's CEO James Hackett, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles NV CEO Sergio Marchionne, and Rick Schostek, executive vice president Honda North America Inc., are scheduled to press their case with Trump. That meeting will also include Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and economic adviser Larry Kudlow, the White House said in a statement.

The White House said the president looked forward to a productive discussion with the automobile executives.

"The President will hear from the automaker CEOs about the impact of the rulemaking on the auto industry and their efforts to negotiate a 'National Program' with the state of California," Lindsay Walters, White House Deputy press secretary, said in a statement.

The meeting comes against a background of occasionally bumpy relations between Trump and an industry that he championed on the campaign trail.

As a candidate, he repeatedly attacked Ford over its decision to build an automobile plant in Mexico. Three days before Trump's inauguration, Ford announced that it would abandon the plant -- even though construction was underway. The president-elect responded with tweets of praise.

#### Nafta Concerns

Trump aimed more attacks at GM and Toyota over manufacturing plans for Mexico, and both responded by announcing billions of dollars in already planned investments in American plants.

Automakers, parts suppliers and dealers have been wary about the administration's renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement, warning that higher local content requirements could be unworkable and raise vehicle prices.

"Their hand is a bit stronger than perhaps the administration realizes," Adam Jonas, an auto analyst at Morgan Stanley, said Friday on Bloomberg Television. "Those 10 CEOs might represent the better part of 1 million jobs in the United States and indirectly supporting many, many millions more, particularly in states that supported the administration, such as Michigan."

Jones said the automakers definitely want one standard. "And they don't want this going to the Supreme Court and being dragged out in the media and somehow be in the public, affiliated with a kind of hostility toward the world's fifth-largest economy, California," he said.

Trump trade-related tirades also have been a routine issue for the likes of Volkswagen AG, Daimler AG and BMW AG, with Trump blasting Europe's auto trade imbalance with the U.S. and threatening to tax German car imports.

The Friday morning summit is a key milestone in the industry's effort to win relief from the rules that began in the first days of Trump's presidency. Carmakers and their Washington trade groups lobbied the administration to reconsider mileage standards locked in by the Environmental Protection Agency during the final days of Barack Obama's presidency.

Trump granted automakers their wish in March 2017 while laying out an explicit quid pro quo: a promise to cut them a break on environmental regulations in exchange for more hiring in the U.S. Within days, two of the industry's major trade groups published a full-page newspaper advertisement thanking Trump for reinstating a review of the rules.

The EPA completed that review last month and found that fuel-efficiency regulations for cars and light trucks are too stringent and must be revised. Yet a draft that recommended freezing the standards in 2020 showed the administration had something far more aggressive in mind than what carmakers expected, or wanted.

#### Political Dilemma

It also contained a legal case for denying California the ability to set tougher standards than the national ones -- something that sparked a sharp retort from Brown and other state officials.

Now, blowback from environmental groups and the prospect of a costly legal battle with California have put carmakers in the position of trying to find a middle ground while not coming off as unsupportive of Trump.

"We support standards that increase year over year that also are consistent with marketplace realities," Mitch Bainwol, chief executive officer of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, told a House panel on Tuesday.

In the meeting at the White House, the executives plan to say they'd support standards that grew tougher each year through 2025, not a freeze that the administration is considering.

"Automakers wasted no time rushing to Washington with their deregulatory wish list after Trump's election," Madeline Page, campaign coordinator for Public Citizen, a consumer advocacy group, said in a statement. "Now they're rushing to

Washington, D.C., again, this time to try to distance themselves from the administration's deeply unpopular clean cars rollback."

Public Citizen activists plan to drive a 2006 Ford Focus rigged with an ersatz smog plume hovering over the car's roof around Washington on Friday.

'Collision Course'

"The automakers are on a collision course that they charted," Page said.

But, in a letter to Trump on Thursday, three members of his presidential transition team urged him to dismiss the automakers' concerns about legal battles with California and proceed with a rollback.

The current rules will make cars more expensive, limit consumer choice and give California an outsize role in national policy making, wrote Thomas Pyle, president of the Institute for Energy Research; Myron Ebell, director of the Center for Energy and Environment at the Competitive Enterprise Institute; and former Virginia Secretary of Transportation Shirley Ybarra.

"If there is to be one national standard, it makes more sense for that standard to be set by the federal government and not by one state government," they said in the letter. "But that is what is likely to happen if you change direction now."

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### **Politico**

<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/energy/whiteboard/2018/05/trump-i-do-have-confidence-in-pruitt-1204255>

#### **Trump: 'I do' have confidence in Pruitt**

By Anthony Adragna, 5/11/18, 12:45 PM

President Donald Trump said today he continues to have confidence in embattled EPA chief Scott Pruitt.

"Yes, I do," Trump replied when asked if he has confidence in Pruitt today, according to a pool report. They were meeting at the White House with auto executives about fuel economy requirements.

Pruitt is facing a dozen active investigations into various allegations of lavish spending and ethical lapses.

The embattled EPA administrator sat one seat away from the president. White House legislative director Marc Short said earlier this week Pruitt would remain in his post for the "foreseeable future."

Pruitt has faced allegations of lavish spending on his 24/7 security detail, questions over his \$50-a-night condo agreement with the wife of a Washington lobbyist who met with the EPA chief, accusations he sidestepped the White House to give hefty raises to close aides, concerns over his frequent first-class flights and blowback for tightly-controlled events with industry groups that left out the public and the press, among other problems.

During a pair of congressional hearings last month, he largely blamed staff for the ongoing scandals. He'll return to Capitol Hill next week for a May 16 hearing before a Senate Appropriations subcommittee sure to feature additional questions over his behavior. The House Oversight Committee is in the process of interviewing some of Pruitt's closest aides as they investigate the allegations.

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### **The Hill**

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/387272-trump-says-he-still-has-confidence-in-pruitt>

## Trump says he still has confidence in Pruitt

By Timothy Cama, 5/11/18, 12:28 PM

President Trump told reporters Friday that he still has confidence in Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administration Scott Pruitt amid continuing ethics and spending scandals.

Asked by CNN's Ryan Nobles at a White House meeting with Pruitt, automaker executives and others whether he has confidence in the EPA head, Trump responded, simply, "yes, I do."

Pruitt was sitting two spots away from Trump at the time.

Pruitt has been at the center of a slew of ethical and spending controversies in recent months, including over a \$50-per-night condo rental last year from a lobbyist, a security detail that has cost taxpayers more than \$3 million, a \$43,000 soundproof booth for his office, frequent first-class travel on the government's dime and more.

Democrats, environmentalists and even some White House officials like Chief of Staff John Kelly have pushed Trump to fire Pruitt.

But Trump has thus far repeatedly stood by the embattled EPA chief. Pruitt's aggressive deregulatory agenda — including ongoing work to roll back global warming rules for cars — has continued to please conservatives and Trump.

"The president is pleased with the job that he is doing as EPA administrator," White House press deputy Raj Shah told reporters on Thursday. "However the issues that have been raised — I think you guys are all familiar with — they have raised some concerns and we are hopeful and expecting that administrator Pruitt will be able to answer those."

Reporters were allowed into the room for a brief portion of Trump's meeting with automaker heads on Friday, enough time for Trump to speak and other attendees to introduce themselves.

Trump told reporters the meeting would be both about corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards and his desire to have more cars built in the United States. The EPA and Department of Transportation are working to ease fuel economy rules going forward, and a leaked proposal would freeze standards in 2020 for six years.

"We're working on CAFE standards, environmental controls," Trump said. "We're working on how to build more cars in the United States. We have a great capacity for building. We're importing a lot of cars and we want a lot of those cars to be made in the United States."

Trump said he is happy that many manufacturers are investing in the United States and creating jobs, which he attributed to the Republican tax overhaul passed last year.

He specifically called out Fiat Chrysler Automobiles CEO Sergio Marchionne for that company's plans to build a plant in Michigan.

"Thank you, you're moving to Michigan, from Mexico. That we like," Trump said. "Now he's my favorite man in the world."

Trump added that "we have other incentives coming" to promote domestically produced cars.

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### Washington Examiner

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/energy/trump-says-he-supports-scott-pruitt-at-epa-despite-scandals>

Trump says he supports Scott Pruitt at EPA despite scandals



By Josh Siegel, 5/11/18, 12:38 PM

President Trump said Friday he still supports Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt despite ongoing spending and ethics investigations.

"Yes, I do, thank you," Trump said when asked by a reporter whether he has confidence in Pruitt.

Trump was sitting two seats away from the EPA chief when he was asked the question. They were participating in a meeting at the White House with U.S. automakers about their plan to weaken fuel-efficiency rules.

Pruitt is the subject of 11 federal investigations over his spending and ethics practices. The White House is conducting its own probe but has not announced the results.

Trump's statement of support comes after Vice President Mike Pence hailed Pruitt Thursday for his deregulatory moves at the EPA.

"Scott Pruitt has done an outstanding job lifting the burden of regulations that were stifling American businesses across this country," Pence said in an interview on MSNBC. "We really do believe that much of the economic growth that we've seen over the last 15 months has been as much a result of deregulation as it's been with the tax reforms that are just now beginning to have an impact on the economy. So we're very grateful for Scott Pruitt's leadership."

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### Politico

<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/energy/whiteboard/2018/05/white-house-trump-pleased-with-pruitt-but-must-address-concerns-1201725>

#### **White House: Trump 'pleased' with Pruitt, but must address 'concerns'**

By Alex Guillen, 5/10/18, 7:48 PM

The White House today reiterated its support for Scott Pruitt, but noted the EPA administrator will need to answer for his recent controversies.

"So the president is pleased with the job that he's doing as the EPA Administrator," White House spokesman Raj Shah told reporters aboard Air Force One.

"However, the issues that have been raised that I think you guys are all familiar with, you know, and they have raised some concerns," Shah said. "And we're hopeful and expecting that Administrator Pruitt will be able to answer those."

White House legislative director Marc Short told reporters on Wednesday that Pruitt will be around for "the foreseeable future."

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### Reuters

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-epa-pruitt/epa-chief-pruitts-ethics-issues-have-raised-concerns-white-house-idUSKBN11B33R>

#### **EPA chief Pruitt's ethics issues have raised concerns: White House**

5/10/18, 6:15 PM

ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE (Reuters) - U.S. President Donald Trump is pleased with Scott Pruitt's performance as head of the Environmental Protection Agency but allegations of ethical missteps "have raised some concerns," a White House spokesman said on Thursday.

The White House is hopeful Pruitt will be able to answer those concerns, spokesman Raj Shah told reporters aboard Air Force One en route to Elkhart, Indiana.

Pruitt has been under fire for potential ethics lapses, including flying first class, excessive spending on security, and the rental of a room in a Washington condominium owned by the wife of an energy lobbyist.

"The president is pleased with the job that he's doing as the administrator. However, the issues that have been raised that I think you guys are all familiar with - they have raised some concerns," Shah said.

"We're hopeful and expecting that Administrator Pruitt will be able to answer those," he said.

The EPA has defended Pruitt's spending on travel and security, saying it has been crucial to protecting him from public threats and ensuring he can conduct confidential work, and have also pointed out that Pruitt's lease for the room in Washington, of about \$50 a night he was there, was around market rate.

Pruitt has drawn praise from conservatives during his EPA tenure for rolling back Democratic former President Barack Obama's policy to curb greenhouse gas emissions from power plants and other environmental regulations opposed by industry.

Although Trump has expressed support for Pruitt for his work on scaling back environmental regulations, White House sources have told Reuters officials are worried about the flow of charges against him.

There are nearly a dozen pending investigations into Pruitt with the EPA inspector general, the Government Accountability Office and the White House Office of Management and Budget, as well as the U.S. House of Representatives oversight committee.

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## **The Hill**

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/387216-pruitt-met-with-cardinal-accused-of-sexual-abuse>

### **Pruitt dined with Cardinal accused of sexual abuse: report**

By Brett Samuels, 5/10/18, 10:56 PM

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) head Scott Pruitt reportedly dined in Rome last year with a Catholic leader who was under investigation at the time for child sexual abuse, according to newly published records.

The New York Times on Thursday released a series of internal communications obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request that show Pruitt dined at a five-star restaurant with Cardinal George Pell in June 2017. Pell, like Pruitt, has expressed skepticism about man-made climate change.

Documents obtained by the Times show that EPA officials began planning for the dinner in May 2017. Pell had also offered to give Pruitt a tour of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, which apparently did not take place.

The Times reported that none of the EPA schedules from that day noted that Pell was at the dinner with Pruitt.

Prior to the trip, EPA officials learned that Pell was under investigation, according to The New York Times' Eric Lipton.

Pell has since been put on trial related to charges of sexual abuse spanning decades.

The EPA didn't immediately respond to a request to comment from The Hill on Thursday night. Pruitt has come under intense scrutiny in recent months amid a slew of ethics controversies.

Previous reports have revealed that Pruitt racked up millions of dollars worth of travel and security expenses, including reportedly bringing his detail to Disneyland and the Rose Bowl. Pruitt justified his first-class travel by saying it was based on security precautions.

He has also come under fire for renting a Capitol Hill condo from the wife of an energy lobbyist for \$50 each day he stayed there, and constructing a \$43,000 soundproof booth in his office.

During testimony on Capitol Hill last month, Pruitt said those controversies were largely matters handled by his staff or distractions from his agency's efforts to carry out Trump's agenda.

White House deputy press secretary Raj Shah said Thursday that President Trump is "pleased with the job that he is doing." However, the White House has said it is hopeful Pruitt can answer questions about his ethical controversies.

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## Politico

<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/energy/whiteboard/2018/05/carper-barrasso-wont-hold-hearings-on-pruitt-1199184>

### Carper: Barrasso won't hold hearings on Pruitt

By Anthony Adragna, 5/10/18, 5:00 PM

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee is not planning to hold oversight hearings on the ongoing ethical woes of EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, the panel's top Democrat said today.

Chairman John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) "is not prepared to hold oversight hearings with Scott Pruitt at this time," Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.) said after speaking with Barrasso.

An aide to Barrasso did not immediately respond to request for comment. The Wyoming Republican has previously said the embattled EPA chief would return to the committee at some point and told POLITICO earlier this week he's "closely monitoring" the situation surrounding Pruitt.

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## Washington Post

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/many-mocked-this-scott-pruitt-proposal-they-should-have-read-it-first/2018/05/10/31baba9a-53c2-11e8-abd8-265bd07a9859\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.c06553bf296f](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/many-mocked-this-scott-pruitt-proposal-they-should-have-read-it-first/2018/05/10/31baba9a-53c2-11e8-abd8-265bd07a9859_story.html?utm_term=.c06553bf296f)

### Many mocked this Scott Pruitt proposal. They should have read it first. (\*Op-Ed)

By Robert Hahn, 5/10/18, 8:03 PM

*Robert Hahn is a visiting professor at Oxford University's Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment and a non-resident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. He recently served as a commissioner on the U.S. Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking.*

When Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt proposed a rule last month to improve transparency in science used to make policy decisions, he was roundly criticized by interest groups and academics. Several researchers asserted that the policy would be used to undermine a litany of existing environmental protections. Former Obama

administration EPA officials co-wrote a New York Times op-ed in which they said the proposal “would undermine the nation’s scientific credibility.” The Economist derided the policy as “swamp science.”

But there is a lot to cheer about in the rule that opponents have missed. A careful reading suggests it could promote precisely the kind of evidence-based policy most scientists and the public should support.

Critics typically argue that the proposed regulation would suppress research that contains confidential medical records and therefore scientists could not share underlying data publicly for privacy reasons. Such restrictions, these critics say, would have excluded landmark research, such as Harvard University’s “Six Cities” study, which suggested that reducing fine particles in the air would dramatically improve human health and helped lead to more stringent regulation of fine particles in the United States.

These concerns are likely the result of rhetoric surrounding the rule. Pruitt describes the regulation as an attempt to end “secret science” at the agency. Conservatives have long prioritized the need for making all data and statistical models used in regulatory decision-making available for independent scrutiny, with the intent to limit the use of studies that cannot be replicated. Breitbart went even further, characterizing the action as “a massive victory for both Pruitt and President Trump in their war on the Green Blob.”

But it appears that few defenders or opponents of the proposal have actually read the proposed EPA regulation, which is only seven pages long. Both sides distort the regulatory text.

Here’s what the rule would actually do. First, it would require the EPA to identify studies that are used in making regulatory decisions. Second, it would encourage studies to be made publicly available “to the extent practicable.” Third, it would define “publicly available” by listing examples of information that could be used for validation, such as underlying data, models, computer code and protocols. Fourth, the proposal recognizes not all data can be openly accessible in the public domain and that restricted access to some data may be necessary. Fifth, it would direct the EPA to work with third parties, including universities and private firms, to make information available to the extent reasonable. Sixth, it would encourage the use of efforts to de-identify data sets to create public-use data files that would simultaneously help protect privacy and promote transparency. Seventh, the proposal outlines an exemption process when compliance is “impracticable.” Finally, it would direct the EPA to clearly state and document assumptions made in regulatory analyses.

Here’s what the EPA’s rule wouldn’t do: nullify existing environmental regulations, disregard existing research, violate confidentiality protections, jeopardize privacy or undermine the peer-review process.

The costs of compliance with EPA regulations are substantial. A draft report from the White House Office of Management and Budget suggests that significant EPA regulations imposed costs ranging from \$54 billion to \$65 billion over the past decade. These rules also realize substantial public-health and environmental benefits estimated to range from \$196 billion to \$706 billion over the decade.

Given the stakes for both the cost of compliance with EPA regulations and the real risks that pollution poses to public health and the environment, this rule should be read closely by critics and supporters for what it actually says. Just as transparency in science and evidence are essential, so, too, are intellectual honesty and accurate policy communication.

Taking steps to increase access to data, with strong privacy protections, is how society will continue to make scientific and economic progress and ensure that evidence in rule-making is sound. The EPA’s proposed rule follows principles laid out in 2017 by the bipartisan Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking — humility, transparency, privacy, capacity and rigor — and moves us toward providing greater access to scientific data while protecting individual privacy.

Instead of throwing stones, the scientific community should come together to offer practical suggestions to make the rule better. For example, the rule should recognize the incentives for scientists to produce new research. Scientists need to have time to produce and take credit for their research findings. Thus, there will inevitably be a trade-off between the production of new insights and the sharing of data with others, including regulators.

The EPA should also establish use restrictions and a secure data infrastructure so that confidential business and personal data are adequately protected. Finally, it should set procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of this rule. Done right, this could improve government policy not only in the United States but also around the world.

It's still hard to tell how this rule will affect EPA decisions, but one thing is clear: The rule will make the evidence by which we make policy decisions more transparent. The policy might not be perfect, but its benefits will likely far outweigh its costs.

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## **NPR**

<https://www.npr.org/2018/05/10/609979515/how-much-scott-pruitt-has-changed-the-epa-is-an-open-question>

### **Scott Pruitt Praised And Reviled For 'Effectiveness,' But How Effective Is He?**

By Nathan Rott, 5/10/18, 5:06 AM

EPA chief Scott Pruitt is praised by industry and conservatives for his aggressive moves to roll back environmental regulations. But how much he's changed the department is debatable.

## **Transcript**

RACHEL MARTIN, HOST:

Scott Pruitt is still the head of the Environmental Protection Agency. That's notable because there have been 11 investigations into his ethics and public spending. President Trump, though, has stood behind Pruitt. The president says the EPA boss is doing a, quote, "great job of getting rid of environmental regulations that he considers to be a burden." But, as NPR's Nathan Rott reports, how much Pruitt has actually changed so far is an open question.

NATHAN ROTT, BYLINE: Love him or hate him, the narrative around Scott Pruitt is that he's highly effective. Conservatives and industry groups applaud him for overseeing the delay, stoppage or review of roughly two-dozen environmental regulations. Democrats and environmental organizations paint him as the most destructive EPA administrator in the agency's history, labeling him with Trump-esque nicknames like Polluting Pruitt. In reality, though...

ERIC SCHAEFFER: I keep hearing how effective Mr. Pruitt is. And what you're really getting are announcements about what he's going to do. He's just pushing the start button.

ROTT: Eric Schaeffer is the head of the Environmental Integrity Project, an environmental nonprofit that is no fan of Mr. Pruitt's, but his point is one that you hear from many quarters - that outside of delaying Obama-era policies on things like emission standards at power plants or slowing their enforcement, few of those policies have actually changed. Scott Segal, a lobbyist who represents a range of energy companies, says that's partly due to the nature of the governmental beast.

SCOTT SEGAL: Under the best of circumstances, major change in an administration or in the regulatory state takes time.

ROTT: You have to propose what you want to change. You have to take public comment and then address those comments. Then you have to provide documentation of all this because eventually, almost always, you go to court.

SEGAL: It is the courts that are ultimately going to say whether these rules survive or don't.

ROTT: Tom Lorenzen knows this better than most. He spent a decade defending EPA rules at the Justice Department. And he says if an administration wants to change existing environmental rules, they have to explain clearly with evidence why the prior agency's decision was wrong.

TOM LORENZEN: And usually the rules that are rushed out are those that have the biggest troubles in the courts.

ROTT: Lisa Heinzerling, a professor at Georgetown Law School and a former official at EPA under President Obama, says that could be an issue for the Trump administration.

LISA HEINZERLING: I think a lot of people have been struck by the real thinness of the proposals coming out of the agency that would repeal the rules that are in place.

ROTT: She points to Pruitt's proposal to change fuel economy standards. She calls it shoddy. The document, she says, was 38 pages long. The Obama administration's justification for the standards was more than a thousand pages. At least a couple of EPA's actions have already been blocked by courts. Still, some supporters of Pruitt say that he's learned from those earlier missteps and is now being more thorough. Ellen Steen, the general counsel for the American Farm Bureau Federation, is waiting for Pruitt to overhaul a major water rule. And she says, yeah, it's taking a long time, but that's a good thing.

ELLEN STEEN: They are realizing that to do things right takes time, and they're going through a thoughtful process. And we want that because we want what comes out at the end of the day to be something that is thoughtful.

ROTT: And something that will stand up in court. Nathan Rott, NPR News.

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#### **Washington Post**

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2018/05/10/epa-signals-it-will-ban-toxic-chemical-found-in-paint-strippers/?utm\\_term=.282589a4f6de](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2018/05/10/epa-signals-it-will-ban-toxic-chemical-found-in-paint-strippers/?utm_term=.282589a4f6de)

#### **EPA signals it will ban toxic chemical found in paint strippers**

By Dino Grandoni and Brady Dennis, 5/10/18, 3:56 PM

The Environmental Protection Agency signaled on Thursday it will follow through on an Obama-era proposal to ban paint strippers containing a toxic chemical – leaving lawmakers, environmental groups and the families of victims cautiously optimistic.

Since taking office, Pruitt has been laser-focused on undoing environmental and safety rules proposed by President Barack Obama's administration. But the EPA's announcement that it "intends to finalize" a proposed ban on methylene chloride would be the exception.

"Today's announcement demonstrates EPA's commitment to finalize the methylene chloride rule-making," EPA spokesman Jahan Wilcox said in a statement.

The chemical, used by professional contractors and do-it-yourselfers to remove paint, has been linked to dozens of deaths – including 12 people between 2000 and 2011 who specialize in refinishing bathtubs, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report.

But advocates of the ban reserved full-throated cheers until the rule's language is made public and submitted to the White House's Office of Management and Budget, which the EPA said will happen "shortly."

Sarah Vogel, vice president for health at the Environmental Defense Fund, said the nonprofit advocacy group was "encouraged" by the EPA's decision but urged the agency to move quickly to formally block the access to the chemical.

"We and families across this country will be watching closely to make sure this administration actually delivers on today's promise from Administrator Pruitt," Vogel said. "We will delay any celebration until paint strippers containing this deadly chemical are actually off the market."

The EPA first proposed banning the use of methylene chloride in paint and coating removal products in the waning days of Obama's second term. A year earlier, Congress had granted the EPA new powers to restrict the use of that and other chemicals in an amendment to the 1976 Toxic Substances Control Act, the nation's main chemical safety law.

But in December, the Pruitt's EPA indefinitely postponed bans on certain uses of methylene chloride and two other deadly chemicals often found in consumer products. For a time, it seemed like the ban was headed to the trash bin, along with many other Obama-era rules after President Trump's election.

That delay in December kicked off an effort to salvage it.

Several Democratic lawmakers asked Pruitt about the chemical and urged him to ban it in a pair of hearings on Capitol Hill last month. Rep. Frank Pallone (D-N.Y.) invoked the deaths of Drew Wynne and Joshua Atkins, who both died from methylene chloride exposure. Pallone asked Pruitt if he had anything to say to those families given the lack of EPA action.

Pruitt didn't directly address that question, but he made clear that the agency hadn't abandoned its evaluation of the chemical's safety. "There has been no decision at this time," he said at the April 26 hearing.

That did little to satisfy Pallone. "Look, you say you're going to do something, but these chemicals are still on the shelves, and they make a mockery of [chemical reform] legislation that this committee works so hard on," Pallone said. "And it makes a mockery of EPA. You have the power immediately to get this chemical off the shelves. And you're not doing it. And you should do it."

Later that day, another Democrat from New York, Rep. Nita Lowey, accused Pruitt of "strategically starving programs that identify chemicals that could be harmful to children, while rolling back and delaying regulations for deadly chemicals."

Pruitt replied that the agency was reviewing the comments of the proposal to ban the chemical. "I take this issue very seriously," he said.

The lobbying effort also continued behind the scenes.

After the hearings, the Environmental Defense Fund contacted Pruitt's office on behalf of the families of Wynne and Kevin Hartley, another man who died from methylene chloride exposure. The group asked for a meeting with the administrator.

"I wanted to use Kevin's story to try to save more lives," Wendy Hartley, Kevin's mother, told The Washington Post in an interview. "We do not need any more lives lost due to this. And if I could tell Kevin's story and get someone to listen to it and do something about, then I was willing to tell his story."

Pruitt has met with few environmental groups throughout his tenure, more often conferring with industry representatives. But he agreed to meet with the mothers.

So this past Tuesday morning, Wendy Hartley, along with Cindy Wynne and her other son Brian Wynne, met Pruitt and several of his aides at his office in EPA headquarters.

The families brought with them photographs and the death certificates of the two men, and explained to Pruitt what happened to them.

Wynne, 31, was running a cold-brew coffee business in Charleston, S.C., when he died last year while stripping paint from the floor of a walk-in refrigerator using a product called Goof Off. Hartley, 21, was a trained contractor who died last year while refinishing a bathtub with White Lightning Low Odor Stripper near Nashville. Both men both were wearing respirators when they died.

Pruitt “was very attentive to us,” Cindy Wynne told The Post in an interview earlier this week before the EPA’s announcement. “He was somewhat surprised when we showed him the cans from Lowe’s,” where her son had purchased the paint stripper.

Her son, Brian, asked Pruitt if he agreed that methylene chloride was a problem. Pruitt responded, “I do.”

But when pressed on whether he would finalize the ban, the administrator did not make a commitment, the family members said.

“We all have the same sense that for a moment there, we felt like there was positive momentum,” Brian Wynne said. “And then that went out of the room pretty quickly when he was steadfast against the word ‘ban.’ ”

In an interview after the announcement Thursday, the brother said he was now “cautiously optimistic” that Pruitt would follow through.

“This is a positive development,” Brian Wynne said. “It was a surprising one. We certainly didn’t see this coming in our meeting with Administrator Pruitt. But we’re certainly encouraged by this sign that he seems ready to take action.”

The EPA said the “meeting with the families was constructive.”

“It provided the families the opportunity to share with Administrator Pruitt the circumstances in each of their cases and the Administrator the opportunity to hear directly from them,” Wilcox said. “There was an exchange of ideas, and we appreciate EDF reaching out to request the meeting.”

Public health and environmental groups were also pleased but cautioned that more work needs to be done. Vogel urged the EPA to “move quickly to implement a ban, and that includes ensuring necessary administrative procedures are followed to guarantee a permanent ban and that these products are promptly removed from store shelves.”

The EPA said it will not redo a 2014 risk assessments that determined inhaling the paint-stripping fumes is dangerous. “The agency is not reevaluating the paint stripping uses of methylene chloride, but relying on its previous risk assessments and working diligently to ensure the safety of chemicals in the marketplace,” it said.

On Thursday, Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), the top Democrat on the Environment and Public Works Committee, called the EPA’s announcement “welcome news, especially after the agency previously delayed finalization of this proposed ban indefinitely.”

“I am also encouraged that the agency is relying on previous risk assessments that clearly and scientifically showed just how threatening products containing methylene chloride could be to people’s health and safety,” Carper added in a statement. “However, just like a law doesn’t mean much if it is not enforced, intentions to finalize a ban on a deadly chemical don’t mean much if that chemical stays on the shelves.”

The American Chemistry Council, the main trade association for U.S. chemical companies, greeted the move with muted acceptance.

“EPA has authority to move ahead on specific conditions of use,” spokesman Jon Corley said in a statement. “ACC supports EPA’s completion of the risk management rule-making on methylene chloride and publication of a final rule.”



Methylene chloride can kill either through direct narcosis or through metabolization into carbon monoxide, which binds to hemoglobin in the blood and inhibits oxygen from moving around the body. Exposure to as little as six ounces can kill, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

The heavier-than-air chemical can pool in places with poor ventilation, like bathrooms. “But now we’re seeing more and more cases in other types of confined spaces,” said Lindsay McCormick, a project manager for EDF’s health program.

In 1997, OSHA issued its own restriction on the chemical’s use in workplaces. But those standards did not cover regular consumers, who can buy methylene chloride products at most hardware stores.

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**AP**

<https://apnews.com/b69be1b066074020ae040b14d9722c78/EPA-study-finds-arsenic,-lead-in-canyon-near-Salt-Lake-City>

**EPA study finds arsenic, lead in canyon near Salt Lake City**

5/11/18

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A report says elevated levels of some heavy metals could pose a threat to people who frequently use parts of American Fork Canyon outside Salt Lake City.

The Environmental Protection Agency says researchers found arsenic and lead levels exceeding recommended levels for hikers, campers and ATV riders who visit the area often over long periods.

The Daily Herald reports the findings are attributed to waste rock and tailing piles from mining during the 1800s and early 1900s on property now owned by the U.S. Forest Service and Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort.

The preliminary assessment, released in March, is a first-step look at whether cleanup is needed.

EPA site assessment manager Ryan Dunham says the main concern is for people visiting the area year after year, not one-time visitors.